

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1059

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CY, TU

SUBJ: TURKISH IMMIGRATION TO CYPRUS

1. WE HAVE READ WITH GROWING CONCERN OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS REPORTS FROM NICOSIA SUGGESTING THE EXISTENCE OF A SUBSTANTIAL, GOT COORDINATED, PROGRAM OF IMMIGRATION OF TURKS OF NON-CYPRIOT BACKGROUND TO CYPRUS. SENSATIONAL NEWS-PAPER STORIES ON THIS SUBJECT, REINFORCED BY GREEK CYPRIOT PROPAGANDA, HAVE LED TO GENERAL PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE IN THE U.S. AND ELSEWHERE OF THE IDEA THAT THE GOT IS ENGAGED IN A COLONIZATION EFFORT IN NORTHERN CYPRUS. THE RECENT KENNEDY REPORT ON CYPRUS ACCUSES

THE GOT OF PURSUING A POLICY OF COLONIZATION AND CONDEMNS THE USG FOR NOT HAVING SPOKEN OUT. MOREOVER, THE FISCAL 1976 MILITARY ASSISTANCE BILL REPORTED OUT OF THE SFRC JANUARY 30 CONDITIONS TURKISH ASSISTANCE ON (AMONG SEVERAL OTHER THINGS) NO FURTHER INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF TURKISH
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MAINLAND CIVILIANS IN CYPRUS.

2. WHEN REPORTS OF A GOT-SPONSORED IMMIGRATION PROGRAM FIRST BEIN TO CIRUCLATE LAST FALL, WE ATTEMPTED TO DEVELOP INFORMATION LOCALLY WHICH WOULD EITHER PROVE OR DISPROVE THESE REPORTS. WE HAVE NOT RPT NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, WHILE ADMITTING TO THE PRESENCE IN CYPRUS OF "ITINERANT LABORERS" FROM ANATOLIA, HAVE BEEN ADAMANT IN THEIR DENIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF A GOVERNMENT INSPIRED OR DIRECTED IMMIGRATION PROGRAM. OTHER SOURCES, AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL SENSITIVITY OF THE ISSUE, HAVE SIMPLY AVOIDED COMMENT. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, AN EMBASSY OFFICER WAS TOLD BY A TURKISH JOURNALIST (OF CYPRIOT ORIGIN) THAT THE GOT IS DEFINITELY ENGAGED IN A PROGRAM OF RESETTLING AS MANY AS 40,000 TURKS IN NORTHERN CYPRUS. THIS PROGRAM IS REPORTEDLY BEING RUN BY THE MINISTRY OF RECONSTRUCTION AND RESETTLEMENT AND AS OF FOUR MONTHS AGO, THE NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO HAD IMMIGRATED HAD REACHED 12,000.

3. COMMENT: THE DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF CYPURS HAS SHIFTED SIGNIFICANTLY DURING THE PAST 150 YEARS AS THE RESULT OF IMMIGRATION FROM GREECE AND EMIGRATION TO TURKEY. THE MOST RECENT MAJOR CHANGE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL DROP IN TURKISH CYPRIOT POPULATION SINCE 1964. IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ISLAND'S TURKISH POPULATION TO TURKEY'S CASE ON CYPRUS, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF THE GOT WERE TO TRY TO REVERSE THE DOWNWARD TREND VIA SOME SORT OF IMMIGRATION PROGRAM. IF SUCH A PROGRAM CONSISTED OF ENCOURAGING AND FACILITATING THE RETURN OF TURKISH CYICIOTS WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY EMIGRATED FROM CYPRUS, IT WOULD BE TROUBLESOME, BUT PROBABLY NOT SOMETHING WE COULD LEGITIMATELY CONCERN OURSELVES WITH. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, SUCH A PROGRAM CONSISTED OF TRANSFER OF ANATOLIAN TURKS, POTENTIALLY SERIOUS LEGAL, MORAL AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS WOULD BE INVOLVED AND WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED.

4. THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE AT PRESENT SEEMS TO US INCONCLUSIVE-- IT IS AT LEAST NOT SUFFICIENTLY INDISPUTABLE THAT WE CAN CONFRONT THE GOT WITH IT. NEVERTHELESS, THE EVIDENCE PERSUADES US THAT THERE IS A HIGH PROBBILITY THAT THE GOT
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IS AT LEAST PERMITTING AND ENCOURAGING THE IMMIGRATION OF TURKS OF NON-CYPRIOT BACKGROUND TO NORTHERN CYPRUS. WE INTEND TO STEP UO OUR EFFORTS TO SEEK FURTHER INFORMATION AND WOULD GREATLY APPRECIATE ANY CONCRETE EVIDENCE EMBASSY NICOSIA MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACQUIRE. IF WE DO ACQUIRE CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY INFORM THE GOT OF OUR DEEP CONCERN AND OPPOSITION TO ANY SUCH EFFORT TO CHANGE THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTER OF CYPRUS. WE COULD

ALSO POINT OUT THAT EVIDENCE OF COLONIZATION WOULD TEND TO
DESTROY THE ORIGINAL TURKISH LEGAL JUSTIFICATION FOR THE
1974 INTERVENTION.
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